

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-05 ISO-00 /009 R

66011

DRAFTED BY EA:NESILVER:AOA

APPROVED BY EA:KENNETH M.QUINN

S/S:RPERITO

-----140240Z 062834 /61

O 132328Z APR 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE

SECRET STATE 083448

LIMDIS-EYES ONLY FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE

FOLLOWING REPEAT MANILA 5393 ACTION SECSTATE 13 APR 77

QUOTE

SECRET MANILA 5393

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: RP, PFOR, PPDC, MARR, SHUM

SUBJ: MEETING WITH MARCOS: DELIVERY OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER

REF: STATE 074683

1. I MET WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS FOR OVER AN HOUR BEGINNING AT NOON APRIL 13 SHORTLY AFTER HIS RETURN FROM VISIT TO MINDANAO. MARCOS LOOKED TIRED AND, AT OUTSET OF OUR INTERVIEW, WAS LESS THAN HIS USUAL LIVELY SELF. HE SPRUCED UP AS OUR CONVERSATION WENT ON, AND, IN WALKING ME TO THE DOOR AT THE END OF OUR TALK, SEEMED NORMALLY VIGOROUS.

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2. AS FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS, I DELIVERED PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER. MARCOS READ IT THROUGH CAREFULLY AND SAID THAT HE HAD RATHER EXPECTED IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE DEFINITION OF THE US-PHILIPPINE MUTUAL DEFENSE TREATY. INSTEAD, HE INTERPRETED IT AS AN INVITATION TO EXPRESS HIS VIEWS DIRECTLY IN A

LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER. HE MADE NO RPT NO REFERENCE
TO THE PARAGRAPH ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

3. MARCOS SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE SOME TIME
BEFORE PREPARING AN ANSWER, AND WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO
TALK TO ASST SECRETARY HOLBROOKE AND CODEL WOLF BEFORE HE
REPLIES. THERE THEN FOLLOWED SOME DISCUSSION ON
ARRANGEMENTS FOR BOTH VISITORS AND ITEMS MARCOS WILL WISH
TO RAISE WITH THEM.

4. MARCOS SAID HE FELT DATE FOR REOPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS
ON U.S. MILITARY BASES MIGHT SLIP BEYOND EARLY JUNE TIME
FRAME MENTIONED BY ROMUALDEZ TO HOLBROOKE. HE SAID THAT
HE ANTICIPATED HIS WORK ON THE MUSLIM PROBLEM WOULD BE
LENGTHY AND WOULD PROCEED IN A SERIES OF ARRANGEMENTS
WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY SEQUENCED.

5. THIS LED NATURALLY INTO A DISCUSSION OF THE CURRENT
STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS ON THE MUSLIM ISSUE AND THE ANTICIPATED
REFERENDUM. MARCOS BEGAN BY DESCRIBING HIS JUST COMPLETED
VISIT TO MINDANAO, THE VARIOUS FACTIONS WITHIN THE MNLF
AND THE COMPLICATIONS OF DEALING WITH THE ISLAMIC
COUNTRIES. HE CONTINUES TO EVIDENCE A HEALTHY SKEPTICISM
ABOUT THE LIBYANS, AND SEEMS TO REALIZE THE DANGERS OF
AFFRONTING THE CONVERSATIVE ARABS (ESPECIALLY THE SAUDIS)
BY PLAYING EXECLUSIVELY WITH THE LIBYANS.

6. HE TENDS TO INTERPRET SAUDI EXPRESSIONS OF RESERVE
ABOUT HIS CURRENT PLAN AS EVIDENCE OF THEIR DESIRE TO
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MAINTAIN PRESTIGE BY HAVING THE FINAL ACCORD ON
PHILIPPINE MUSLIM PROBLEMS SIGNED IN JIDDA. HE SAYS THAT
HE IS ATTEMPTING, THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS, TO KEEP THE
SAUDIS, THE KUWAITIS AND OTHERS APPEASED. HE BELIEVES
THAT NUR MISUARI AND OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE MNLF ARE
WORKING TO FRUSTRATE EVENTUAL APPROVAL OF THE MARCOS-
QADHAFI AGREEMENT BY THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE. AT VERY LEAST,
HE SAID, THE MNLF MAY TRY TO GET THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE
TO VOTE TO RESTUDY THE WHOLE ISSUE.

7. I THEN ASKED MARCOS WHETHER HE, INDEED, HAD ANY DIRECT
WORD FROM MISUARI THAT HE WOULD BE COMING TO THE
PHILIPPINES AND WHETHER HE REALLY ACCEPTED THE MARCOS-
QADHAFI AGREEMENT. MARCOS SAID THAT HE DID NOT RPT NOT
HAVE ANY DIRECT WORD FROM MISUARI. HE SAID, HOWEVER,
THAT AS RECENTLY AS LAST TUESDAY HE HAD TALKED BY
PHONE WITH QADHAFI AND HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT MISUARI WOULD
GO ALONG WITH THE PROGRAM. HE WENT ON TO EXPLAIN,
HOWEVER, THAT THE MNLF WAS SPLIT, BOTH IN THE FIELD AND

AT THE CENTER. THEREFORE, IT WAS HARD TO PREDICT MISUARI INTENTIONS.

8. MARCOS WAS VAGUE ON WHETHER MISUARI AND ISLAMIC CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVES WERE COMING TO THE PHILIPPINES. HE HOPED THEY WOULD BE HERE "IN FEW DAYS," BUT DOUBTED THEY WOULD ARRIVE BEFORE THE REFERENDUM (APRIL 17). HE WAS NOT SURE WHERE MISUARI PERSONALLY WAS AT THIS TIME, BUT POINTED OUT THAT HIS FAMILY WAS STILL IN TRIPOLI.

9. I FINALLY SAID THAT OUR REAL CONCERN WAS WHETHER MARCOS PERSONALLY AND CANDIDLY EXPECTED THE WHOLE EXERCISE TO BREAK DOWN AND A MAJOR MILITARY CONFLICT TO RESUME IN THE SOUTH. I SAID WE HAD RECEIVED SEVERAL REQUESTS FROM PHILIPPINE MILITARY WHICH SEEMED BASED ON THAT PREMISE.

10. MARCOS SAID WITH SOME PRECISION THAT HE PERSONALLY
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DID NOT RPT NOT EXPECT A MAJOR MILITARY OUTBREAK TO ENSURE IN THE SOUTH. HE KNEW THAT HIS MILITARY OFFICERS AND ENRILE FELT OTHERWISE. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVED HE COULD CONTROL THE SITUATION. HE FELT FROM HIS TRIP TO MINDANAO, THAT THE CHRISTIANS WERE UNDER CONTROL. AS FAR AS THE MUSLIMS WERE CONCERNED, HE PLANNED TO GIVE THEM "A SERIES OF CONCESSIONS," SINCE THEY SEEMED TO LIKE TO DO BUSINESS IN THE WAY OF THE "ORIENTAL BAZAAR." IN ANY EVENT, IF FIGHTING DID RESUME, HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE ONLY BY A SMALL FACTION OF THE MNLF AND THAT THE OTHERS COULD BE SATISFIED BY THE ARRANGEMENTS HE WOULD OFFER THEM.

11. MARCOS WENT ON TO ELABORATE ON THE VARIOUS DIVISIONS WITHIN THE MUSLIMS IN THE SOUTH. HE SAID THAT SOME OF THESE MAY BE ARTIFICIAL AND THAT THERE COULD BE A DELIBERATE MNLF POLICY TO HAVE SOME MUSLIMS RALLY TO THE GOVERNMENT WHILE OTHERS TOOK TO THE HILLS. ON THE WHOLE, HOWEVER, HE FELT THAT MOST MUSLIMS WERE TIRED OF FIGHTING AND COULD BE INDUCED TO LIVE IN PEACE.

12. COMMENT: IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT MARCOS REALIZES THE COMPLEXITY OF THE VARIOUS PIECES HE IS DEALING WITH, BOTH WITHIN THE ISLAMIC WORLD AND WITHIN THE PHILIPPINE MUSLIM COMMUNITY. HE APPEARS TO REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT HE CAN MANIPULATE THESE PIECES TO HIS OWN ADVANTAGE.
SULLIVAN.
UNQUOTE VANCE.

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 13-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE083448
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NESILVER:AOA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770128-1147
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770460/aaaabzzv.tel
Line Count: 167
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6348b2a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: 77 STATE 74683
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2816753
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH MARCOS: DELIVERY OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER
TAGS: PFOR, PPDC, MARR, SHUM, RP, US, XC, (CARTER, JIMMY), (MARCOS, FERDINAND),
To: JAKARTA
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6348b2a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009